

FACULTY OF MUSIC UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Contemporary Music Ensemble

ROBIN ENGELMAN,
Conductor

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1989

8:00 PM

WALTER HALL

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PROGRAM

Nogaku (1980)

Mark Hand

- I. Kami Noh (god play)
- II. Shura-mono (warrior play)
- II. Kazura-mono (woman play)
- IV. Kyojo-mono (frenzy play)
- V. Kiri Noh (demon play)

Lesley Duff, Jennifer Hellen, Martina Kurth -- flutes
Gabor Taryan, percussion

Suspended Rain (1982)

Mark Hand

Ananya Menon, viola; Stephen Clarke, electric piano;
Robert Clutton, double bass; Gabor Taryan, percussion

Angel Dance (1984)

Mark Hand

Jennifer Hellen, flute; Pippa Williams, oboe;
Robert Tilley, trombone; Robert Clutton, double bass;
Gabor Taryan, percussion

Sources (1985)

Mark Hand

Pippa Williams, oboe and water glass; Stephen Clarke, electric piano;
Elizabeth Ely, harp; Irina Grunberg, cello;
Gabor Taryan, percussion

Jazz Music (1989)

Gary Kulesha

[In Three Movements]

Norman Engel, Timothy Birtch, trumpets; Katherine Robertson, horn;
Robert Tilley, trombone; Colin Couch, tuba;
Stephen Clarke, piano; Andy Morris, marimba

*** INTERMISSION ***

Pearls (1981)

Alexina Louie

- I. Tutti
- II. Duo
- III. Tutti
- IV. Trio
- V. Tutti
- VI. Duo
- VII. Tutti

**Jennifer Hellen, flute and alto flute; Pippa Williams, oboe;
Irina Grunberg, cello; Stephen Clarke, piano;
Steven Wassmansdorf, percussion**

Aria (1988)

Joseph Landers

**Pippa Williams, oboe; Lori Gemmell, harp;
Steven Wassmansdorf, percussion**

Folk Songs (1949)

Luciano Berio

**Laurie Farrow, soprano; Martina Kurth, flute;
Lesley Duff, piccolo; Colleen Cook, clarinet;
Ananya Menon, viola; Irina Grunberg, cello;
Elizabeth Ely, harp; Andy Morris and Steven Wassmansdorf, percussion**

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PROGRAM NOTES

Nogaku

Mark Hand

Mark Hand was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1956. He began his music training with private studies in piano, and later, in harpsichord with Lawrence Ritchey. At the University of Manitoba he studied composition with Boyd McDonald and Dr. Robert Turner, graduating in 1978 with the Gold Medal in Music. He received fellowships to pursue graduate studies at the University of Toronto where he attained his Master of Library

Science degree in 1981. Immediately upon graduation, he took up the post of Music Librarian with the Saskatoon Public Library where he remained for the next three years.

One of his works, *Soliloquy*, was awarded a prize in the 1979-80 CBC National Radio Competition for Young Canadian Composers. Since that time this piece has been performed in Vancouver and Toronto and recorded on a Radio Canada International album featuring the soprano Joanne Dorenfeld (RCI 569). He has received commissioning grants from the Manitoba Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council, The Canada Council and the CBC, on behalf of Winnipeg's Aurora Musicale, among others. His music has been played in Canada, the United States and England. In 1987, he was asked to write a piece for string orchestra for the Redcliffe Chamber Orchestra, which was given its premiere in London, England in 1988.

He is presently the Librarian for the Canadian Music Centre, an institution which collects and promotes the music of Canadian concert composers, a position he has held since 1984.

Nogaku for three flutes and percussion was commissioned by *Music Inter Alia* of Winnipeg. The title, *Nogaku*, literally means Noh drama music. A classical Japanese Noh play is intensely dramatic, but it is not drama in the Western conception of the word. At times, songs, dance, mime and action of any sort are virtually absent. The result is "emotion springing from quiescence." Gesture is all important; a single step can represent a journey of a thousand miles, a slight inclination of the head, inexpressible grief. Likewise, in *Nogaku*, melody has been distilled into a few significant notes and phrases, and the silence between the sound is as integral to the whole as is the expanse of white sand which separates the carefully positioned boulders in a Japanese rock garden.

A typical Noh drama traditionally consists of five plays -- god play, warrior play, woman play, frenzy play and demon play. This program is designed to consist of an introduction (jo), development (ha) and climax (kyu). The jo-ha-kyu principle also applies to each individual play in the cycle. Accordingly the "kyu" or climax of the first play is quite restrained in comparison to that of the fifth play. This aesthetic principle is also at work in the five movements of *Nogaku*; compare the rather static dignity of the felicitous god play to the restrained violence of the demon's climactic dance in the last section.

In Noh the plot does not develop through conflict as in most Occidental drama. All events have taken place years -- even centuries -- earlier, and the audience knows the story. The characters present a vision of life painted with the colours of memory. Likewise, memories are evoked in *Nogaku*; fragments reappear, patterns re-occur.

"Behold! Truly the world is like a lightning flash glistening upon the morning dew."

Suspended Rain

Mark Hand

Suspended Rain is scored for viola, electric piano, double bass and percussion. The title is meant to suggest an image of a moment frozen in time. Similarly, although the music is at times agitated, the overall effect is a static and delicate one. Minimal melodic material is repeated and developed in a variety of contexts, and the music is built up of layers, the texture of which becomes thicker as the piece progresses.

Suspended Rain was commissioned by Arraymusic and premiered in April of 1982 at Toronto's Trinity United Church.

Angel Dance

Mark Hand

Angel Dance is a one-movement work for flute, oboe, trombone, double bass and percussion. The title was inspired by an ancient Japanese Noh play, Hagoromo, in which a fisherman chances upon a cloak of feathers mistakenly left behind by a heavenly being. The angel dances for the mortal in exchange for her cloak without which she cannot return to heaven. The musical structure is primarily horizontal rather than vertical. Melodies are combined heterophonically in layers moving at different rates and the harmonies are by-products of the melodic flow.

Angel Dance was commissioned by *Aurora Musicale* (Winnipeg) and premiered at the Winnipeg Art Gallery in May of 1984.

Sources

Mark Hand

Sources was written for Winnipeg's *Music Inter Alia* concert series and premiered on April 23, 1985 at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Although not a programmatic piece, this one-movement work is not unlike a water lily on the surface of a pond -- gently undulating but never moving very far. The oboe and violoncello alternately call and respond over a background created by the other instruments, electric piano, marimba and harp, who play the given notes freely within a metrical framework created by the chimes. This music reflects my continuing interest in limited scales and music built up in horizontal layers.

-- M.H.

Jazz Music

Gary Kulesha

Born in Toronto in 1954, Gary Kulesha is active as a pianist, conductor and composer. For four years, he was principal conductor of the Canadian Contemporary Music Workshops and, in 1987, he was appointed artistic director, succeeding founder Samuel Dolin. He has guest conducted with such ensembles as Arraymusic, the Toronto Chamber Winds, Toronto Percussion Ensemble, and Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony. Mr. Kulesha's compositions have been commissioned by many artists, including the Canadian Brass, James Campbell, Angela Hewitt, Maureen Forrester, the Cleveland Orchestra, many of the major Canadian orchestras, CBC and Radio Netherlands. He was principal conductor of the Festival Theatre Orchestra at the Stratford Festival from 1983 to 1986, and has provided music for several productions, including *Henry VIII*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Measure for Measure*, and others. In 1986 he was named Composer of the Year by the Performing Rights Organization of Canada and, as such, was the youngest composer ever to be so honoured. Gary Kulesha was recently appointed Composer-in-Residence with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra by the Canada Council.

Jazz Music for Brass Quintet, Marimba, and Piano was written for the York University Faculty Brass Quintet, and was premiered by them in Toronto, with Beverley Johnston playing marimba. I played the piano part. The piece

is intended as an homage to many of the jazz big bands which I listened to in my teens, in particular, the Stan Kenton Band. The jazz influence is strongest in the first and second movements, although it is never obvious in the tonal and harmonic language of the work.

The first movement is built in the form of an arch, with a sharp rhythmic opening idea, followed by an equally rhythmic, but somewhat sparser second idea. In the middle section, the piano and marimba set up ostinati over which a trumpet and the trombone solo. Although solos are written out, the performers are free to improvise if they wish to. The movement then "reverses" by reprising the second idea, then closing with the opening material.

The second movement is also a compressed arch, built on extremely austere material. The piano starts with a statement under clusters in the brass and marimba. The horn then states a more lyrical line, in which it is joined by tuba. The centre of the movement is an improvised piano solo of indeterminate length. This is followed by a fragment of the lyrical idea, and then the movement closes with the cluster and piano theme.

The finale is loosely modelled on a rondo. The muscular opening idea leads into a similar first episode. Following a modified repeat of the opening, the marimba sets up an ostinato over which the piano states a static lyrical idea. The brass pick this up and elaborate on it extensively, becoming increasingly less lyrical. A fugato in the piano and marimba leads into a complex canon in inversion and diminution between tuba and trombone, which in turn leads into a section which opposes the two main ideas of the movement. A final statement of the opening leads into a virtuoso coda for the entire ensemble.

-- G.K.

Pearls

Alexina Louie

Born in Vancouver, British Columbia, Alexina Louie completed her undergraduate work at the University of British Columbia and continued her graduate studies with Pauline Oliveros and Robert Erickson in California where she received a Master's degree in composition at the University of California at San Diego. Since returning to Canada in 1980, she has been commissioned by all the country's major new music groups, as well as by such performers as Jon Kimura Parker (piano), Erica Goodman (harp), and Angela Hewitt with The Orford Quartet (piano quintet). Her orchestral works have been performed by the Montreal, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, and Vancouver Symphony Orchestras, the Toronto Symphony, the Winnipeg Symphony, the Calgary Philharmonic, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, The Esprit Orchestra, and the Tampere Philharmonic (Finland). Named Composer of the Year in 1986 by the Canadian Music Council, her works have been recognized by a Juno award in 1988 (*Songs of Paradise*), and the selection of *Music for a Thousand Autumns* for performance in Hong Kong in 1987 by the International Society for Contemporary Music, where it was picked as one of the best compositions in the ten-day festival.

During the 1989-90 season two major Canadian orchestras will take her works on Asian tours. On October 24, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra performed *The Ringing Earth* in the United Nations General Assembly on United Nations Day and following that performance took the work to Asia. Also in October, Leeds Piano Competition winner Jon Kimura Parker performed her commissioned work *Scenes From A Jade Terrace* in Yugoslavia, Wales, and Hungary capping the tour with a performance in London's Queen Elizabeth Hall. Miss Louie is currently

working on her second commissioned piece from the Toronto Symphony. After its April 1990 premiere, the work will be performed in several major Australian and Far Eastern cities.

Since 1980, Alexina Louie has made her home in Toronto where she works as a freelance composer, writing in all media including dance, film, and television.

Written in 1980, *Pearls* is a conscious departure from my previous pieces, *Lotus*, *Lotus II*, and *Dragon Bells*, in which my primary fascination was with the exoticism arising from the combination of oriental musical influences and avant-garde techniques; in *Pearls* this becomes of secondary importance. Where their movements tend to be hypnotic with repetitive passages which evolve, change, and phase slowly, in *Pearls* I chose to make microscopic these larger gestures, with each of the seven "pearls" a diminutive, (the longest is three minutes, the shortest, fifty-five seconds) contrasting, and complete unit unto itself. I look upon them as small jewels, each with its own distinctive character.

- A.L.

Aria

Joseph Landers

Born in 1965, Joseph Landers is a native of Birmingham, Alabama, and currently resides in Lincoln, Nebraska. Although the composer's catalogue contains works in virtually all media, his main emphasis falls on instrumental works, which reflects his background as a horn player in bands and orchestras. Landers' teachers have included Frederic Goossen, Lothar Klein, and (presently) Robert Beadell. Recent works include *Janissary Music* for eight horns and percussion, *Concertino* for horn and band (which the University of Toronto Wind Symphony will perform in January, 1990) and *Concerto Grosso* for Woodwind quintet and strings.

The *Aria* is a short work written while I was living in Toronto. It is essentially an exploration of the three diverse instruments, and the particular melodic, rhythmic, and timbral interplay that is possible with the combination. The oboe, harp, and tom-toms are of equal importance and each part makes tremendous demands on the performer.

-- J.L.

Folk Songs

Luciano Berio

"A sequence of eleven songs from eight countries or regions.

Not all the songs are collected folk songs -- the first and second were written by a singer from Kentucky, and the sixth and seventh by Berio himself for Cathy Berberian while she was a Fulbright student in Italy in 1949.

1. Black is the colour (USA)

2. I wonder as I wander (USA) -- These two songs were composed by John Jacob Niles (a pupil of d'Indy), and have become so well known as to take their place alongside folk songs.

3. Loosin yelav (Armenia) -- The song describes the rising of the moon in the country of Cathy's origin.

4. **Rossignolet du Bois** (France) -- Rossignolet du Bois asks the nightingale how to love, and he suggests singing to the loved one and asking her for the apples in her garden.
5. **A la femminisca** (Sicily) -- A fishwife awaits the return of her husband from the sea.
6. **La donna ideale** (Italy) -- A lady chosen for marriage must have four qualities: breeding, her style of dressing, her figure and, most important, the dowry.
7. **Ballo** (Italy) -- Even wise men's heads can be turned by love, yet love can resist the heat of the sun, or the frozen ice.
8. **Motettu de Tristura** (Sardinia) -- The singer tells the nightingale how he must sing when they bury her, as their laments for loved ones are so similar.
9. **Malurous qu'o uno fenno** (Auvergne) -- The man with a wife wishes he had none, the man without would like to marry!
10. **Lo fiolaire** (Auvergne) -- A maiden at a spinning wheel explains how she gave a shepherd two kisses when he asked for one.
11. **Azerbaijan Love Song** (Azerbaijan) -- Cathy wrote down this one while listening to a scratchy old 78rpm record, without knowing the language, except for one section of Russian comparing love with a stove."